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ABSTRACT

In 1986 the Dutch government adopted a common core corriculum that would apply to the first 3 years of secondary education. This paper discusses why such a curriculum is necessary, both for improving the individual chances of pupils in the labor market and for society as a whole, and cites the following basic skills as the kernel of the curriculum: (1) language skills; (2) knowledge of one's own history and culture and of other cultures; (3) logical-mathematical knowledge and skills; (4) knowledge of nature and technology; (5) preparation for and orientation toward work; and (6) expressive skills. The proposed subjects of the common core curriculum are listed along with the total number of lessons that should be required over the 3 years. In each subject, the goal is to give balanced attention to the analytical and theoretical elements; the skills to apply the knowledge in a practical way; and knowledge about the social and cultural aspects of the subject. The decreasing numbers of pupils and the simultaneous introduction of a common core curriculum suggest that the geographically evenly distributed junior vocational and junior secondary schools could specialize in the core curriculum of basic education without relatively high new investments in educational facilities. The report concludes with a graphic display of the structure of full-time education in the Netherlands. (MLF)

CORE CURRICULUM AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES IN MODERN SOCIETY

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1. INTRODUCTION

In February 1986 the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) published a report on the school curriculum for 12 to 16 year olds. Based on 30 studies (including comparisons of the education system in several Western countries) proposals were formulated for the content of a common core curriculum. In May 1986 the Dutch government announced its intention to carry out the design.

In many countries the content and quality of education are important topics in public discussion. A common core curriculum, proposed for the Dutch differentiated school system (see the scheme at the last page) and as realized in some countries in middle schools, could imply relatively high new investments in educational facilities.

In the following it is explained why a common core curriculum is necessary and which educational facilities are needed. Giving every member of society a basic education is the central goal.

Basic education is: a common and general training in the intellectual, cultural and social fields, providing a foundation for further development of the personality, for satisfactory participation as a citizen in society and for a justifiable choice of further education and occupation. In section 2 a summary is presented of the results of an analysis of present and future social developments, and of the consequences for the basic skills needed by all. In section 3 the question is answered what the

(technical) possibilities are for learning these skills outside and inside the school. In section 4 an overview is given of a basic education, formulated in the form of a common core curriculum. In this section special attention is given to the facilities needed for the different parts of the curriculum. In section 5 the consequences for the school system and school buildings are mentioned.

The observations on developments are in highly condensed form. A more complete description will be found in the report of the WRR on the common core curriculum, of which an English summary will be published soon (if you wish to have a copy, please give your name and address to the author of this paper).

2. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS AND BASIC SKILLS

a. Cultural developments

- A growing number of women is participating in the labour force, but there are still undesired differences between men and women in the choice of professional training and jobs. A comparatively long and common basic education for boys and girls can give both groups more equal chances in the choices of further education and occupations.
- Family life is changing. Everybody has a chance he or she will have to live alone during a period before marriage, after a divorce or after the death of a partner. This could imply that in the basic education a training is necessary for home care (cooking etc.). However, many parts of the existing, traditional curriculum are useful for this purpose. Other skills are rather easy to learn when necessary: they have a low acquisition threshold, so specific attention to these "caring" skills is not necessary in basis education.
- There is no need for a specific training for a 'leisure society'. Although we live now in a situation of mass unemployment, this does not mean that the preparation for work is less important. On the contrary, having a paid job is, as appears from social surveys, central in the perspective of the younger generations. Apart from that, the skills which are learned in a basic education for future occupations, are useful too for leisure time activities.

- For learning to participate in a complex and increasingly multi-ethnic society, it is very important that all inhabitants have the same basic education. This will also promote social integration. Knowledge of the national language, of history, political and economic institutions belongs to the basic education.
- The growing instability of primary social relations could be a motive for giving more attention to training in social relations at school. However, it is not wise to confront young people directly with the problems of adults. It is better to teach them elements from the cultural tradition (literature, modern and traditional art) in which the important questions of life are dealt with. This could give young people useful instruments for handling the problems they might be confronted with later in their life. The many children who nowadays have personal problems at school (possibly related to their family life), should be given a personal attention by the teacher. These kinds of problems are not suitable for an abstract and general treatment in the curriculum.

b. Technological developments

Technology is becoming more and more important in the job, at home and in public life. Technology demands for most people no new skills, but it requires a better command of knowledge and skills that are already taught in primary school and lower secondary education.

There will be a growing demand for highly specialized technical people. Specialization and specific training of professionals will move in many fields nearer to the point of application in industry or services. This transfer from the school to the job does not imply that the school could lessen its efforts. The quality of basic education determines the possibility of controlling and benefiting from technology. The school should teach knowledge of the basics of technology.

A special computer-programming subject in the core curriculum is not necessary. Learning to program is not an indispensable basic skill. Those young people finding a job in the computer industry, will have no great advantage

from the programming they learned at school. Nor would other pupils derive particular benefit. Mastering the computer will be possible in the near future, without knowledge of programming. However, a general knowledge of the possibilities of computers and of the use of information systems could be useful for everybody. In the near future the computer will be used in nearly all the different subjects of the curriculum (in physics, mathematics, etc.), so that much knowledge will be obtained "on the run". Previously, specific treatment of this subject in the curriculum could be advisable.

c. Economic developments

Given the trend towards international specialization, a West-European country like the Netherlands faces the necessity to restructure the economy: development of new services and of new kinds of industries, e.g. high tech. This new industry will be an economic support for the dependent (bigger) labour forces in other sectors, especially services in the tertiary sector. In all sectors there is a need for highly trained personnel. Companies have to fulfil at the same time requirements of efficiency, quality and flexibility. This demands a different organization of labour and personnel which can participate in decision-making and teamwork, is adaptable and has professional qualifications. This means a high level of basic education is necessary. This basic education enables people to choose new kind of jobs and to follow many kinds of training later in life. For instance nowadays a basic knowledge of mathematics is necessary for many jobs, and for many forms of education.

Initial professional training (in junior vocational training) at secondary level is more often than not a second choice: pupils who don't succeed in general subjects (language, arithmetic) choose an initial professional training at junior vocational schools. This has the effect that a large part of the labour force has not had enough training in basic skills, and is not able to follow further training in and outside the job. Neither is it possible for these pupils to succeed at higher general levels (university) if they change their ideas on choice of education and occupation.

d. Conclusions

An increase of the level of educaticn of all pupils is necessary. This is important for improving the individual chances . pupils in the labour market and for society as a whole. A basic education can promote this increase in level of education. A basic education means for the Dutch educational system that the general education in primary schools will be followed by a common core curriculum for 80 percent of the time in the first three years of all secundary schools: grammar schools, junior and senior secondary schools and junior vocational schools

"Basic" in basic education means: a) a kernel which is the beginning of the further development of knowledge; b) preparation for an occupation, for further education and for being a member of society. Basic skills in this perspective are:

- language skills
- knowledge of one's own history and culture and of other cultures
- logical-mathematical knowledge and skills
- knowledge of nature and technology
- preparation for and orientation towards work
- expressive skills.

These skills cannot be caught up later on if they are not learned at a certain age. Not mastering these skills will be a permanent handicap in society.

3. LEARNING BASIC SKILLS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL

It is conceivable that as a consequence of technological possibilities outside the school certain subjects in the curriculum could be dropped, because the children already learn the corresponding skills elsewhere. It is conceivable too that a higher level of education is attainable through the technological means and facilities used in the school and in family life. In the following some results are presented from studies about the use, effects and possibilities of these means and facilities.

3.1 Radio

Young people use the radio at home for listening to pop music. This has no importance for basic education. The school radio (special national programs for the radio, used in schools) is losing significance. It is not used in secundary education. At primary level it is used sometimes in only a quarter of schools. Only about 1 percent of schools listen to any one particular series of school-broadcasts.

3.2 Television

a. Television at home

Toddlers view television on average for three quarters of an hour a day. As they grow older this time increases. Children aged 12 to 14 spend an hour and a half each day in front of the television set. This may well be an underestimation. This figure is low compared with other countries like Australia, Japan and the United States, where television offers more programmes, and where children watch television for about three hours a day. In the Netherlands too it is expected that young people will in the future spend more hours in front of television, when more programmes will be offered (by cable) and video will be common.

Young people spend most time watching television drama, followed by entertainment and in third place information and sports (only ten minutes). It has not been proven, that television means that children acquire information in a passive way, become restlessness, have difficulties focussing their thoughts, read fewer books and achieve less at school. The most realistic fear seems to be that children don't get enough sleep by viewing too late.

Television enables a child to get information on a large field of subjects, which are also discussed at school. It is not known how much children learn from television. According to the impressions of teachers, some children get some general education, especially about nature (plants and animals). Presumably the effect of television varies with social background. Educational series will have better results in families where parents view together with

the children and discuss the program. The effect of television could be that it widens a gap in general knowledge between children from different social origins. There is no subject in the curriculum which could be dropped, because children learned enough from viewing television.

b. School television

93 per cent of the primary schools and 88 per cent of the secondary schools have one or more television sets. In secondary education nearly the same percentage of schools own video sets, for reproducing national school television programs and other documentaries. The possession of video sets at primary schools has recently grown; at present 55 percent have video sets. Of primary schools and general secondary schools about 80 percent tune in to school television. An average of six series per annum is used. In junior vocational training, a sector which gets little special attention from school television, participation is considerably lower. Only half of the junior vocational schools uses school television and on average three courses per annum per school are offered to the pupils.

It is difficult to tell on the basis of research which subjects of the curriculum are particularly suitable for presentation on television. The teachers themselves especially mention geography, biology, physics and social studies. Although television could in principle convey information effectively, it is not known if school television really succeeds in doing so. Presumably the significance of school television in school is not great. School television can be useful in introducing new compulsory subjects and in the diffusion of new didactic insights. In secondary education, the final examination projects (i.e. series on themes which are part of the examination) supply a particular want. New media, such as the video, are not expected to change this image much.

3.3 Newspapers

Most children in the first years of secondary education sometimes glance at a paper. However, the information they gather is little related to the curriculum.

Children read about crimes, local news, traffic accidents and comic strips. Less than half the children who read the paper sometimes note news from abroad; less than a quarter notice the political news from parliament and government. In the last-mentioned categories children in unfavourable socio-economic conditions are underrepresented.

3.4 Libraries

Books are very important for the diffusion of knowledge. However the use of books differs widely according to the child. Alongside 'bookworms' we find children who scarcely ever glance at books, including school-books. Libraries outside the school appear to gear their youth activities to the subjects in school, especially projects or special topics. They also enable schools to differentiate the subjects of the curriculum for different pupils, and can help pupils with their choice of further education and occupation by offering them information.

In the Netherlands not much research is done into the use and effectiveness of libraries. It is, however, known that the school libraries in Dutch secondary education are of poorer quality than those in countries like the United States and Australia and in Scandinavia (the reason could be that the distance to public libraries is greater in these countries so the school libraries have to be better). Public libraries in the Netherlands are more oriented to supporting primary education than secondary education.

3.5 The computer

Like the benefits of viewing television or reading books, the benefit of using the computer at home varies greatly from child to child. It does not seem sensible to expect a general positive effect on children's knowledge from the introduction of home computers.

There are four ways of introducing computers in schools:

- learning about computers;
- learning with (the help of) computers;
- learning by computers;
- computers as a piece of school equipmentor "tool".

On the first way of introducing computers, some remarks have already been made in section 2 (technological developments). In basic education, a gradual transition is desirable between learning about, with and by computers. There is mainly a difference in the interaction between the computer and the pupil. In drill and practice programs the computer takes the initiative and the pupil reacts. In dialogue, simulation and problem-solving programs the pupil starts the action and the computer reacts. It is not expected that the computer will be a substitute for teachers to any great extent. Especially in basic education, the social relations in the classroom, which are regulated by the teacher and the school, and the personal relations between teacher and pupil, are very important for effective instruction. Learning in basic education is a social activity. Replacement of the teacher by the computer is not desirable, and could never be effective.

Perhaps the greatest importance of the computer in school will be found in its use as a tool: as an electronic black-board, for the access of pupils to databases, for working with facts, figures and text, as a substitute (or extra) for instruments and tools in music and drawing lessons. Moreover the computer can help record pupils' progress, and help with school administration. On the whole the computer could be very useful in basic education, although incorrect applications and exaggerated expectations must be guarded against.

3.6 Conclusions

Children can learn a lot outside the school, but the acquisition of basic skills is as a rule unstructured, and very different for each child. The school will keep its central place in basic education. What children learn outside the school complements rather than rivals school activities.

The media and the computer could improve school effectiveness, but the possibilities are not as great as many authors seem to think.

4. THE COMMON CORE CURRICULUM

Social developments demand an extension of the period of basic education (in primary education) to the first three or four years of secondary education. The solution found in different countries is of integrating different types of schools into comprehensive schools and middle schools etc. This policy is not always successful. In the Netherlands experimental middle schools were created. Like in other countries there is a strong resistance to the integration of schools in the form of middle schools. The majority of teachers, many parents and the majority in government are now opposed to this innovation. However, it seems impossible to return fully to the traditional design. One of the school types in the traditional system is the junior vocational school, which is loosing its attractiveness for many pupils and their parents, and its education certificate has lost its value on the labour market. The difficulties are aggravated by demographic developments (the decreasing number of children). The effect is that in some regions there is a choice between closing all secondary schools (because individual traditional-type schools no longer attract enough pupils) or the survival of school provision in the form of a comprehensive school. In the stalemate in the public debate on education the most pragmatic solution seems to be the introduction of a common core curriculum in the first years of all schools from grammar schools to junior vocational schools and comprehensive schools. To guarantee the same core curriculum in all schools, the subjects offered in schools and pupils' results should be checked at all schools by inspectors and by national tests and examinations. The schools would be free to choose their teaching methods, but the pursued results should be between fixed limits. It is advisable to set a general target level of basic education for all pupils, and a higher target level in each subject for pupils who can achieve more. The common core curriculum would - as proposed - take up 80 per cent of school time. In the 'free' remaining 20 per cent the school would be free to choose other subjects, and it would also be possible to give extra

help to pupils who have difficulties with the subjects of the common core curriculum. The common core curriculum would apply to the first three years of secondary education. Pupils who need more time should get a chance to have an extra year. For junior vocational training it would be advisable to combine the third year of basic education with the two following years of vocational training so that these pupils don't have to wait too long to start this training, but can still have a basic education providing chances for further general and professional training.

These proposed subjects of the common core curriculum are noted below, with special attention to any needed facilities. The total number of lessons over the three years is shown after each subject. In these three years (of 40 school weeks per year and 30 lessons of 50 minutes per week) a total of 3600 lessons is available, of which 680 lessons are intended for free use outside the core curriculum. The content of common core curriculum in the first years of secondary education should have a feed-back effect on the curriculum in primary education. In all the subjects of the common core curriculum, attention should be paid to three aspects:

1. the analytical and theoretical elements;
2. the skills to apply the knowledge in a practical way;
3. knowledge about the social and cultural aspects of the subject.

These three constants can be found in each subject and should receive balanced attention in teaching. Basic knowledge of a foreign language for instance is knowledge of the structure of language and grammar; the skill to use it, in conversation and writing; and knowledge about cultural and social aspects of the countries where this language is spoken. Basic knowledge of economics for instance is knowledge of the principal economic laws; the skill to use that knowledge, for instance in budgeting; and knowledge of the social environment of business, banks, taxes, etc.

a. <u>The national language: Dutch (400 lessons)</u>

The language skill has a kernel and a periphery. The kernel is learned by every speaker of the mother tongue before he or she is six years old. It is the

knowledge of a basic stock of words and of most of the rules of grammar. The task of the school is the development of peripheral skills: those skills which cannot be learned by most pupils without the help of the school. This is important, because most of the peripheral skills are necessary for participating in social life. Peripheral skills can be divided into:

- oral skills: for instance understanding news broadcasts; making inquiries at the post office, at the employment exchange; ability to conduct business talks;
- reading: understanding newspapers, official documents, getting information from different sources (telephone-directory);
- writing: making notes, for instance during telephone calls; writing letters, for instance a letter of application.

In addition the lessons in Dutch are necessary for learning to argue and think, and for gaining access to the cultural tradition via the literature.

The computer can be a useful tool for teaching the mother tongue. It can be used for remedial teaching in spelling. It can help teach pupils to draft a text, by making it easier to compare different alternative choices of words and sequences of argument, etc. Videocameras could be used by a class to analyse the verbal behaviour of pupils in lectures and in discussions.

b. Foreign languages: English (280 lessons) and a second foreign language (German or French) (240 lessons)

English is indispensable in a basic education. It is a lingua franca in international contacts and knowledge of English is useful in many professional fields: commerce, technology and science. Many pupils will need French and German, too, later in life in further education or their profession. In addition both languages provide an entry to European culture. However, it can be doubted if learning three foreign languages is feasible for all children. In the present situation 70 per cent of all pupils in secondary education learn three foreign languages, and 80 per cent at least two. It seems sensible to try to teach

as many pupils as possible two foreign languages. The third foreign language could be an extra offer, in the 'free' part of the curriculum, for those pupils who can manage it. The choice of the second language can be free, with the anticipated effect that in the population as a whole there will be enough knowledge of both German and French.

The required level in both foreign languages at the end of basic education is an ability to participate in a representative set of situations in which these languages could be used. For English the number of situations could be higher, as it is already obligatory in primary education (in two years 100 hours).

The computer could lead to important teaching changes. For the first five or ten years, however, no practical applications for teaching foreign languages are to be expected.

c. Mathematics (400 lessons)

Knowledge of elementary arithmetic and of mathematical concepts is important in everyday life, in occupational activities and in further education in nearly all fields. The results of education in arithmetic in primary education are not satisfactory. A considerable number of pupils don't learn enough, which has negative effects on mathematical attainment in the first years of secondary education. However a recent experiment on innovation in primary education, in which children acquire mathematical and arithmetic knowledge in an active way, and in which the knowledge is put in a meaningful context for children, seems to have positive effects in the schools where this innovation is applied.

Calculators and computers can be useful teaching tools. The calculator cannot be a substitute for learning arithmetic skills, for the use of calculators does not have the effect of getting a better notion of the background to arithmetic operations.

d. Biology (120 lessons) and physics (200 lessons)

Biology has two aspects: knowledge about nature (including the human body) and the related basic

skill of knowledge of the care for health and the environment. In physics a basic knowledge of important concepts and theories is demanded. In addition pupils should get an elementary notion of scientific methods by learning to do simple experiments and reporting on these experiments. Both in biology and physics some attention should be given to chemical phenomena, especially those related to everyday life (medicines, cleaning materials, food).

In these subjects many more teaching tools could be used, with better learning results, than are used at present in secondary education. In biology, books are sometimes the only tool used in teaching. New tools that could be introduced are appliances for growing and caring for plants and animals; equipment for practical work (e.g. microscopes); tools for applied bio-sciences (e.g. blood pressure meter), for practical research (e.g. field-glasses), for the study of plants and animals which cannot be found in the neighbourhood of the school (e.g. slide-projectors, videos). The computer could be used for getting access to data. There is no use for the computer in quantitative aspects of biology; this kind of approach goes beyond a basic education in biology.

Audiovisual-media and the computer could be new tools for teaching physics. Specific applications of the computer for physics are simulation of experiments, and use as a measuring instrument and for the presentation of statistical results.

e. Computer education (20 lessons)

Pupils should learn about the potential uses of computers. From a practical orientation some applications should be explored: the input and processing of facts, texts and images. The accent is on exploring. It is not the intention to teach a skill in working with programs. The value of such a skill will soon be obsolete, as the information field is changing rapidly.

f. History (200 lessons)

History contributes to the shaping of the identity of individuals and of (groups in) society. An important part of history lessons is the transmission of

knowledge about political institutions. New themes in history, which are useful for basic education, are an orientation in daily life of ordinary citizens, and the development of international relations.

The new audio-visual media should not be used as a sop in history lessons. Viewing and listening should be focussed by questionnaires about the presented subject. Pupils should be stimulated to gather information independently and learn to evaluate different sources for their authenticity or partiality.

g. Geography (120 lessons)

How do the earth and our habitat look, and what have people done to them? That is in essence the subject of geography. Answering these questions helps children to explore and to understand their environment.

The computer and coupled audio-visual media could improve the outcomes of the teaching-process. A necessary condition is that these appliances are used in an interactive way; children should not be confronted with the information and images in a passive way.

h. Economics (80 lessons)

Everyone comes into contact in society with the economy: as a consumer, as a producer, as a citizen who has to understand the many economic aspects of politics. An important part of economics in basic education is home economics (buying goods, budgetting).

The use of figures sometimes gives a better understanding than a verbal explanation. Permission to use calculators has made it possible in economics education to give more attention to understanding concepts and relations. It is however a pity that arithmatic skills appear to be decreasing.

i. General techniques (180 lessons)

In basic education the accent within the complicated field of "technics" is on practical skills: learning to manipulate tools, materials, energy and information. This could at the same time give access to theoretical insights and is an introduction to our culture, of which technical characteristics are important.

Apart from the technical tools and special classrooms, an important teaching tool is individual instruction cards for pupils. From this the pupil could learn what to do, depending on his skill.

Audio-visual means are excellent tools for introducing the social aspects of technics. There is no need to produce new films or videos; there are already enough films available commercially, while videos could be made from the stocks already held in the public national broadcasting net.

j. Art education (160 lessons)

Art in basic education means two things:

a. a reflective element, giving insight into the visual aspects of the environment: television, architecture, industrial products;
b. the skill of working with materials for making images: paint, textiles, etc.

It is obvious that audio-visual techniques are essential for the reflective aspect of art teaching.

k. Music (160 lessons)

Most children from 5 to 16 years have a certain musical talent and interest, which can be developed further by education. Music lessons outside the school are not accessible for all children (depending as they do on the interest and financial possibilities of the parents). Music lessons also have - with art - the function of providing an introduction to the expressive elements in the common culture. Although the traditional musical instruments should keep their central position, electronic instruments should also a part of the music class inventory, especially now the prices of such equipment are sinking.

l. Physical education (360 lessons)

Physical education should develop motor skills and contribute to the improvement of physical condition and preparation for future active recreation. In addition it should be a relaxation from mental strains, and it should develop social skills, by learning to cooperate and the

rules of fair play. The school should offer a choice of activities from gymnastics (possibly combined with music), sports (including self defence), athletics, and swimming.

In the future more investment will be needed in sports-facilities. Video can be useful for observation and evaluation.

5. CONSEQUENCES FOR THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND SCHOOL BUILDINGS

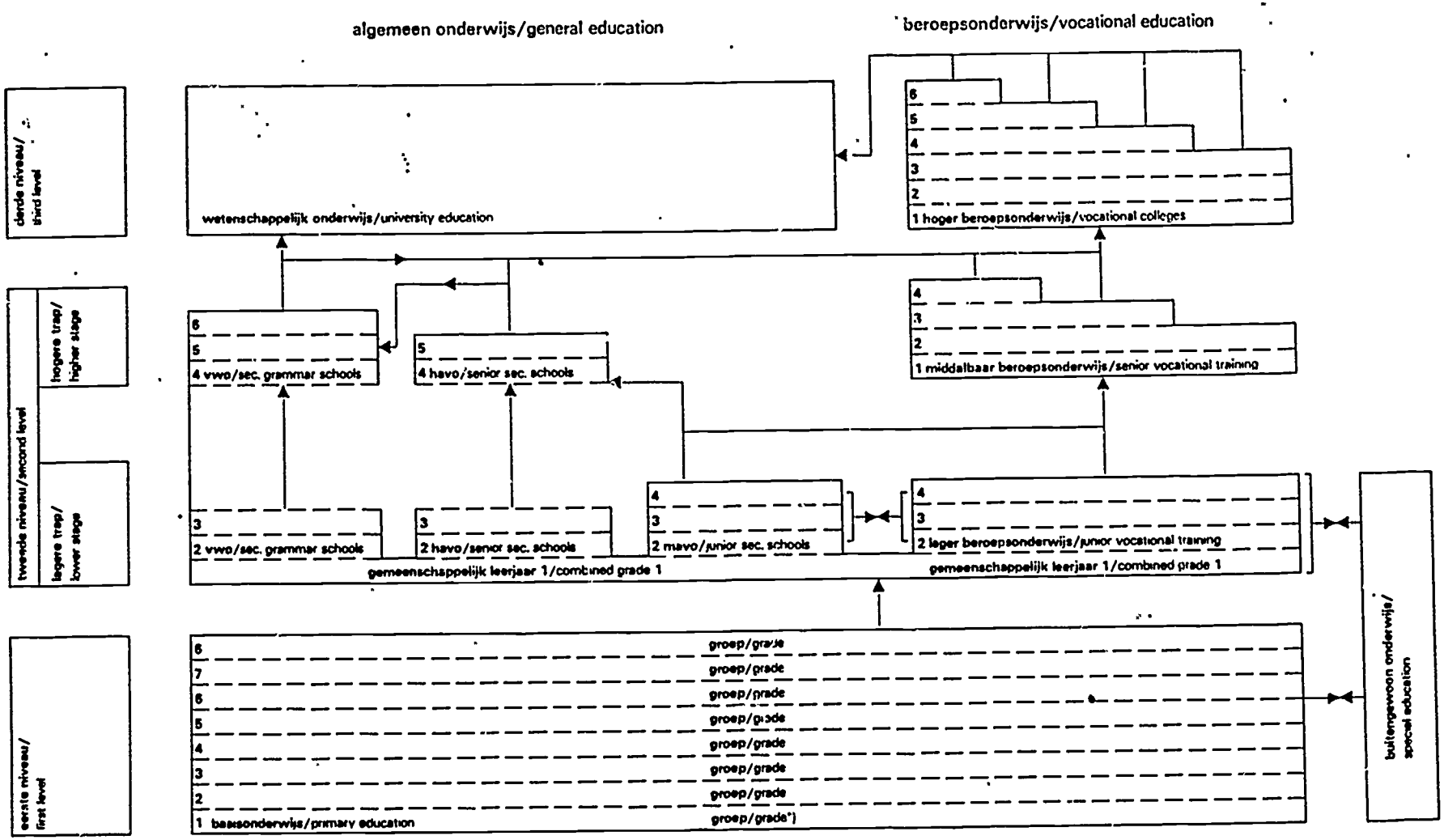
As mentioned in the introduction to section 4, demographic changes are resulting in a decreasing number of pupils (25 to 30 percent), with possible negative effects for school facilities in some regions. In this situation the introduction of basic education could be an advantage, in that it could give a criterion for deciding which schools should close down or merge. The existing differentiated school system could be continued, but it is also possible to strive for further integration if extremist positions in the middle school debate are abandoned. The WRR report analyses the different arguments and makes clear that there are elements in the proposals for innovation which could be approved by all. If the subjects of the core curriculum are formulated at national level and the target levels for basic education are also set nationally, then the schools could be left free to choose how they wished to teach the basic education. This could be done in a middle school way, by teaching in mixed ability classes, or alternatively in a more traditional way by streaming and setting the pupils with different learning abilities in different grades. In this way a common core curriculum could be introduced, while taking into account the objections made by many teachers against mixed grouping of pupils.

In reactions to the WRR-report several suggestions were made for the planning of facilities and school buildings in a situation of decreasing pupils numbers with the simultaneous introduction of a common core curriculum. Primary schools are not considered as suitable for offering the extra three years of basic education. The buildings and classrooms lack the needed facilities. At secondary level

junior vocational and junior secondary schools are geographically evenly distributed, and these schools could specialize in the core curriculum of basic education. Junior vocational schools are especially suitable, for they already have the equipment for the technical subjects on the core curriculum. Apart from initial costs there would be no need in the long run for an extra budget for basic education. Nowadays 70% of all pupils go to junior vocational training and junior secondary schools. With the expected 30% decrease in pupil numbers, all pupils could go to these schools. This could imply that grammar schools and senior secondary schools should specialize on the second stage of secondary education. It may be expected that after basic education more pupils will go to this second phase than at present. The specialization on the second stage will have the advantage that grammar schools, in particular, can keep their special educational atmosphere.

There could be a problem of transition. Some subjects of the second stage, which do not belong to the core curriculum of the first stage, will already have to start in the first phase in the 'free' part of the curriculum (for example Latin). If some schools or some pupils do not choose these subjects as an extra, then there still is no problem; even then it would be possible to choose a grammar school in the second stage. It is assumed that in the second stage, a choice of different curriculums will be possible, in which it is possible to compensate by extra training or substitution. For example the pupil who did not choose Latin in the first phase could take extra lessons at grammar school, or choose another subject instead of Latin, such as Greek or classical history and culture.

Structure of full-time education in the Netherlands



*) starting at 4 years of age : compulsory at 5